The Madras Mail
NOVEMBER 30, 1922

BANGALORE

Current Engagements

(From our own Correspondent.)

BANGALORE, TUESDAY.

Saturday, Dec. 2.—Concert in aid of Bangalore Babies (Child Welfare Association) City, Y.M.C.A., 5-30 P.M.
Combined Church-workers' Service, St. Mark's ... 6 P.M.
Thursday, Nov. 30.—Gymkhana Races ... ... 3-30 P.M.
Saturday, Dec. 9.—Concert, Stafford House, Bishop Cotton Girls' School ... ... 6 P.M.

Advance, Bangalore

So many fantastic stories and theories have of late been prevalent in Bangalore as to the future of the Civil and Military Station that a word or two based on fact may do the man-in-the-street good. He has become obsessed, right into the heart of the bazaar with the fairy tale that the glories of the station have departed; if he is a business man he deplores the ruin that is staring him in the face and if he is a prospective buyer of "a roof over his head" he is sitting on the fence till the last of the captains and the kings have shown the town a clean pair of heels in order then to buy a house, or a building site, at the price of the peppercorn of old.

Among other impossible reports he has got hold of is one to the effect that H. H. the Maharajah has lately insisted on the resumption of the assigned tract in order to garrison the station with Mysore troops and so to save the State its subsidy of Rs. 35 lakhs which is paid for the British Army. As a matter of fact, that visit of His Highness to the Viceroy last summer had to do only with the question of the surplus revenues of the Assigned Tract, and there is evidence that a working settlement has been arrived at. But if you mentioned these revenues to the said man-in-the-street, not 5 per cent. of him can tell you that he understands what they mean. He does not know that it is not one anna of Municipal revenues that goes west, so to speak, but only the surplus over expenditure on the Imperial side of the Administration. This expenditure includes one-third of the Residency charges, the Police, the cost of justice, education, etc. The sources of those revenues are excise, income-tax, agricultural land-tax, registration, police, stamps, education, and so forth.

This income has grown from about Rs. 6 lakhs to Rs. 20 lakhs now-a-days, and, as we all know, there has been a proportionate rise in expenditure. There is always a surplus, though, to which, under an agreement made when the British Commission handed over the Mysore State to the Maharajah, the sovereign is entitled, and of late large accumulated surpluses have been so handed over. But as no surplus can be possible until normal requirements are met, and as, after all, the income-tax and the excise bill are paid by the people inhabiting that area, it is conceivable that they have a growing right to have their full demands met after the Imperial charges have been paid. It is on these lines that for many years the Municipal representatives of the people have been urging their claims on the Imperial Government and at last the Government of India have come to see the force of their contentions. Their case in a nutshell is that, short of increasing Municipal taxation, they are unable to carry out certain large schemes for the amelioration of the living conditions of the people, such as sewerage, elementary education, the housing of the poor, to name only a few of the projects. As we have seen lately, the Municipal Commission have submitted for the sanction of the Government a number of schemes on which they can work during the next five years, and there are hopes that they will not be refused.

GENERAL

There will be Gymkhana races on Thursday, the 30th, at 3-30 P.M.

Mrs. Hugh Lee has arranged a concert in aid of the Y.W.C.C. for Saturday, December 9, at Stafford House, at 6 P.M.

Mr, Banerji, the Dewan, has returned from Mysore.

Dr, H. Holst delivered a lecture this afternoon under the auspices of the Young Muslim Students' League, on "Islam as a Cultural Power" in the Collegiate High School in the city. The chair was taken by Colonel P. A. Skipwith.

The Rev. J. Khan, attached to the Indian troops in Bangalore, who was charged with breach of trust in respect of a horse left with him by Mrs. White, has been discharged by the Second Magistrate on the ground that the evidence disclosed a matter for a Civil Court.

COMING MILITARY ACCESSION

On the other side of the popular question—Is it true that Bangalore is to be reduced to a third-class military station? I must confess to quite complete ignorance of the classification of the Army of the present day; I only know that we are still a Brigade Area, short only since the war of one Horse Battery, one Indian Cavalry regiment and one Indian Infantry Battalion. Otherwise we are still of Brigade strength, and—what are the prospects?

It is nice to say "Wait and See"; but if there is no harm in an intelligent anticipation, I may tell the pessimists at once that it is probable that, as a result of the labours of the Inchcape Committee and as an important measure of Army economy, Wellington as District headquarters will be scrapped in favour of Bangalore. There is the obvious strategic reason for the change as held by the late Lord Kitchener, that here we have a junction of three large railway systems, a temperate climate, and a training ground for recruits which was proved over and over during the war what time this station sent out many thousands of men who were landed in India *via* the Cape for their training.

I think it was the Indian Chamber of Commerce at Bombay who, the other day, in forwarding their retrenchment recommendations to the Inchcape Committee, urged that the British Army should be trained in this country. Mr. Winston Churchill used to say when he was a subaltern with the 4th Hussars in Bangalore that the trained soldier landed in Bombay cost the State £80; I venture, to think that during the war, it was possible in Bangalore to complete this training at half the cost. That was a pre-war quotation for England; what is it to-day?

Another reason why we should not lose heart about the future of this town is that the Inchcape Committee is also believed to be coming to the conclusion that Bangalore is the one ideal station in the country for the location of the many Army Schools of Instruction. One need not be surprised therefore, if, except as to frontier training facilities, Bangalore is decided on as the one and only centre for all Military peace activities of this kind.

TO BRING RENTS DOWN.

People with the most elementary inside knowledge scout the notion absolutely that Bangalore can ever be scrapped as a military centre. And as to the rest, while rents in the military zones proper have had a tendency to go down, things are at least stationary in the other parts which are favoured by the very large number of retired folk from all over India. In some respects, though, there has been a distinct tendency to return to and to exceed the boom period of the war in sales, for in a recent transaction in a central position it worked out to about Rs. 27,000 an acre of land and a bungalow that was bought in 1914 for Rs, 17,000 and which was sold during the height of the boom for Rs. 26,000 changed hands for the third time a few weeks ago for the astonishing figure of Rs. 33,000. Are we down-hearted? Perish the thought!

This is "all very nice and large" for speculators and business people, I admit. I admit also that the settler in these parts wants his pension to go further than it ever did before; he certainly wants rents to go down first. Well, what is the remedy? Just this—float a syndicate of pensioners (there are very many excellent business men among them) who have uninvested or only poorly invested, money and build, build the right class of house at a minimum cost for a small family. If the family have no children of a school-going age, then do not affect the central situations where land will soon be Rs. 30,000 an acre; get away to those less-congested suburban spots that are still available, and, for heaven's sake, *combine* to beat the alleged wicked landlord. They say he 'is waiting on the Municipal doorstep every day to put up his rents immediately they discover his actuals. Even a little Building Society, instead of two ratepayers' associations, should result in some of the healthiest colonies for European and Anglo-Indian pensioners that ever were dreamt of in their collective philosophy.

As long as human nature remains what it is and as long as houses are run up on dear sites, rents must continue to soar; indeed, a time is coming presently when there may be a practical stoppage of the building industry as applied to divided and subdivided "compounds". But to the people who will use their eyes there are open spaces still in the suburbs for self-contained little communal settlemnts where the rents need not exceed 6 per cent. on outlay. It is all just a practical matter of "Cut idle criticism of the *genus* landlord and the bootless aspersions of the Municipal body, and get to work."

CHILD WELFARE ASSOCIATION

A correspondent writes:

Under the auspices of the Child Welfare and Maternity Association, Bangalore City, a concert will be held in aid of the "Babies of Bangalore" at the City Y.M.C.A., on Saturday, Dec. 2 at 5-30 P.M. The concert is under the patronage of Mr. A. R. Banerji, the Dewan, Mrs. W. P. Barton, the wife of the British Resident, has also kindly consented to be present. Mrs. Banerji is taking an active part in the concert which is the first of its kind and is an harmonious blending of East and West. The programme includes both English and Indian music, a sketch "Lord Ullin's Daughter" from Campbell and a few *Tableaux Vivants* from the Indian Classics. This is the first occasion on which these tableaux are being presented in Bangalore and as there is a great demand for tickets, the public are advised to buy them early in order to avoid disappointment.

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